

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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45

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-15 SSC-01 SAL-01 SAJ-01 GAC-01

MBFR-03 ACDA-19 OMB-01 TRSE-00 RSR-01 /113 W

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O 041208 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8926

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

USNMR SHAPE IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OSLO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 9370

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, FR

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDED US REACTION TO DEBRE' S DEPARTURE

HELSINKI FOR US DEL MPT

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VIENNA FOR US REP MBFR

1. DEFENSE MINISTER DEBRE' S DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR CONFIRMED, APRIL 4, PRESS REPORTS THAT DEBRE WILL NOT BE A MEMBER OF NEW FRENCH GOVERNMENT.
2. DEBRE HAS BEEN SYMBOL OF GAULLIST CONTINUITY AND CONSIDERED BY MANY OBSERVERS AS A MAJOR IMPEDIMENT TO IMPROVED FRANCE- US/ NATO DEFENSE COOPERATION. HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE BOTH A TACTICAL MISTAKE AND INACCURATE FOR US OFFICIALS TO WELCOME DEBRE' S DEPARTURE EITHER PUBLICLY OR ON BACKGROUND AS AN INDICATION OF FAVORABLE MAJOR FORTHCOMING CHANGES IN FRENCH DEFENSE POLICY.
3. AS SEEN FROM PARIS, OUR PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE IN THIS FIELD NOW SHOULD BE TO MAKE IT AS EASY AS POSSIBLE FOR DEBRE' S SUCCESSOR TO BUILD UPON THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS IMPROVED US/ NATO- FRANCE DEFENSE COOPERATION WHICH BEGAN WHILE THIS ORTHODOX GAULLIST HEADED THE FRENCH DEFENSE MINISTRY.
4. THE BEST WAY TO ENSURE THIS IS TO MAINTAIN A " NO COMMENT" POLICY IN PUBLIC BUT TO NOTE " ON BACKGROUND" THAT US/ NATO- FRANCE DEFENSE RELATIONS HAVE BEEN IMPROVING, ALBEIT AT A MEASURED PACE, DURING DEBRE' S TENURE. WE COULD CITE DEBRE' S JULY 1972 VISIT TO THE US AND THE RECOGNITION IN THE FRENCH DEFENSE WHITE PAPER OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ALLIANCE TO FRANCE AS EXAMPLES OF A MORE PRAGMATIC FRENCH APPROACH TO DEFENSE RELATIONS WITH NATO AND THE US.
5. IN ANY EVENT, BROAD FRENCH DEFENSE POLICY WILL CONTINUE TO BE MADE BY PRESIDENT POMPIDOU. ACCORDINGLY, WE SHOULD NOT EXPECT ANY RADICAL SHIFTS AS A RESULT OF DEBRE' S DEPARTURE. WHAT WE CAN WORK TOWARDS, HOWEVER, IS THE CONTINUED EVOLUTION OF FRENCH POLICIES IN DIRECTIONS MORE FAVORABLE TO THE OVER- ALL ALLIANCE DETERRENT. CROWING OVER DEBRE' S FALL WILL ONLY HINDER THIS EVOLUTION.
6. NEW DEF MIN EXPECTED BE NAMED TOMORROW. (INFORMED SPECULATION FOCUSES ON PPT MINISTER GALLEY WHO IS CONSIDERED ORTHODOX GAULLIST.)

IRWIN

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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TAGS: MARR, PFOR, FR
To: ANKARA
ATHENS
BONN
EUR
NATO
SECSTATE WASHDC
USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

WASHDC

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